

“Lunatics (or Why You Exist and Everything Is What it Is)”

Ephesians 1:3-14

3 in our series on Paul's letter to the Ephesians

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[Several, short video clips from the movie *Moonstruck* are shown. Narrator says, “The moon is a little like love. Sometimes it makes you act a little crazy. Moonstruck.”]

“Moonstruck” is like our word “lunatic,” derived from *luna*, the Latin for moon. To be lunatic or moonstruck is to be driven crazy by the glory of the moon. And it's confusing, because we're not sure if it's bad crazy or good crazy or both.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, looking at you and then trying to talk about you, I feel crazy. You are big, you are glorious, you are more than I can comprehend. So, Jesus, we invite you to drive us crazy...not bad crazy, but good crazy. Help us to see you. Help us to preach in Jesus' name, amen.

Message

This is our third sermon from Paul's letter to the Ephesians. So far, every sermon has been on the same sentence: Ephesians 1:3-14. In Greek, it's the longest sentence in the Bible. So all the sermons have really been *one* sermon. I struggle with how to bring them all together.

But this week as I read the sentence over and over, I kept thinking about a book. Outside of the Bible, it may be the most Christian book I've ever read: *The Pirate Who Tried to Capture the Moon*. Children, I'll read it to you now.

There was once a fierce pirate who loved nothing. He lived alone on an island, where he strode about in armor, waving a broad sword. And he watched for ships to capture.

Through his glass, he spied the ship of flowers, with its daffodil flag and its sails of Queen Anne's lace. Day after day, he followed that ship in his dark schooner, and kept it in the shadow of his black sails. He smiled as the petals curled, the stems bent, and finally one white rose dropped into the sea.

The fierce pirate chained that ship to his island, and he laughed. But then he looked at the sky and saw the moon sailing as it pleased. He lifted his sword, jiggled his armor, and said, “Someday, Moon, I'll capture you too.”

From his lookout, he saw the ship of horses, tossing. Red stallions galloped upon its decks, black colts leaped above the waves. The pirate gave any angry kick.

He chased that ship in his steady galleon, and from his cannons he shot bits into their mouths and the horses reared. From his guns he shot saddles and the horses rolled, until one white mare dove into the sea.

The fierce pirate chained that ship to his island. And he laughed. But then he saw the moon tossing through the clouds, sailing as it pleased. He waved his sword, thumped his armor, and said, “Someday, moon, I'll capture you, too.”

Then he piled his deck with sticks and twigs, watching for the ship of birds, which no one could catch.

When it came into sight, with its escort of eagles, its sails like wings, he sat and waited till it landed in his huge floating nest. Then he caught that ship that no one could catch, and he laughed. He laughed until the sea was empty and there was nothing sailing anywhere except the moon sailing in the sky.

The pirate knew it was time to capture the moon.

He climbed up his mast and waved his sword above his head, shouting, "Moon. Follow me!" Moonlight shone on his armor. But the moon drifted free.

So the pirate shot at the moon. The dark barrels of his cannons swiveled high—*Boom boom boom*—but the cannonballs fell straight back down and slid into the sea with hardly a splash. And still the moon sailed across the sky.

The pirate stormed down to the ship of birds and he tied a raven to his head, hawks to his arms, herons to his legs, a crow to his chest. Through the moonlight, slowly he rose, waving his sword. But the birds grew tired. Their wings failed, they fell through a cloud, and the pirate dropped into the sea like a piece of clay, while the moon sailed across the sky.

The pirate paced back and forth in his rusty armor, back and forth, to and fro. He walked in circles, day and night, until he passed an old ship of books he had captured long ago.

He searched its broken decks and shredded sails until he found a book that told all about the moon. Then the pirate laughed.

He took that book and six horses and sailed for land. He harnessed the mares to his ship, and he ripped across the earth—he ripped over fields and streams, leaving a scar. Slowly, the pirate who loved nothing moved over the land in his ship, looking for everything that the moon loved.

The moon loves to shine through curtains, said the book. It loves to float in pools of water. It likes to peek over small hills. The moon loves poetry.

The pirate slashed curtains from farmhouses and drapes from mansions. He cut curtains from stages and he loaded them all onto his ship. Into barrels he scooped frog ponds and reflecting pools and swimming holes. He chopped at small hills with his sword and shoveled them into his hold. He captured poets and everything else he knew the moon loved. He swiped candles from the tables of Italian restaurants. He grabbed sadly playing violins from under the chins of gypsies. He kidnapped lovers as they gazed at each other softly, walking hand in hand.

"It's the moon that brings the woman to the man" (from *Moonstruck*).

[Peter sings:]

When the moon hits your eye
Like a big-a pizza pie
That's amore
When the world seems to shine

Like you've had too much wine
You're in love

Dancing in the moonlight
Everybody's feeling warm and bright
It's such a fine and natural sight
Everybody's dancing in the moonlight

We like our fun and we never fight
You can't dance and stay uptight
It's a supernatural delight
Everybody was dancing in the moonlight

Well, you get the idea: Lovers and children who dance in the moonlight.

He kidnapped lovers as they gazed at each other softly, walking hand in hand. And the pirate sailed that bursting ship back to his island. And he waited. Clouds moved across the sky. The wind blew the empty sea. And finally the moon rose.

Now, I'd just like to pause for a moment and ask a few questions.

1. Is the moon good? What is the moon? It's a rock that orbits the earth, reflecting the light of the sun. The moon is glorious. The sun is also glorious, but the sun is a star. It's so glorious that if you look in its face, you'll go blind.

But we can look at the moon. In fact, we see the glory of the sun shining in the face of the moon. So the moon reflects the sun's light on the dark side of Mother Earth. "The light shines in the darkness," and it's glorious. The moon is good.

2. Did the pirate love the moon? No! He coveted the moon. He wanted to own the moon, and he couldn't. So he hated the moon, for the moon revealed that he was *not* the moon.

He hated the moon, and he loved nothing. So even if he captured good things, he couldn't enjoy good things. Just like we preached a few weeks ago...

[Barbossa in a movie clip from *Pirates of the Caribbean*]

The drink would not satisfy, food turned to ash in our mouths, and all the pleasure of company in the world could not slake our lust. We are cursed men, Miss Turner. Compelled by greed, we were. But now, we are consumed by it.

Look! The moonlight shows us for what we really are. We are not among the living, so we cannot die, but neither are we dead.

For too long I've been parched of thirst and unable to quench it. Too long I've been starving to death and haven't died. I feel nothing. Not the wind on my face, nor the spray of the sea, nor the warmth of a woman's flesh.

[Barbossa steps into moonlight becoming a skeleton]

You best start believing in ghost stories, Miss Turner. You're in one!

[Barbossa drinks from a bottle of wine, and it pours right out of him. Other ghosts laugh in the background.]

What are you looking at? Back to work!

“The moon reveals us for what we are...cursed men.” They tried to capture the good, and thus could no longer enjoy the good, for they were not good.

3. Did the pirate understand the moon? Well, he knew *about* the moon. He knew that the moon sailed free, and he wanted to be free. He knew what the moon liked, because he had a book and the book had a list: Italian restaurants, lovers, children dancing in the night. The book told him all about the moon. It was the knowledge of the good, but the pirate didn't know the good. He hadn't met the good.

He knew *about* the moon, but he didn't *know* the moon. So he tried to capture the moon. Like we say, “He thought he hung the moon.” That means he thought he was God or wanted to be God.

So the pirate saw the good, coveted the good, but didn't know the good. So...

4. Did the pirate choose the good in freedom? Well, if he chose the good, it certainly wasn't a good choice.

Pontius Pilate asked the crowd, “Whom shall I hang on the tree? Barabbas or Jesus?” They chose the good, but it wasn't a good choice. And they were not good.

The moon is good, but the pirate isn't good. And the pirate isn't free. The pirate thinks he's free, but he's driven and addicted. He's a lunatic trapped in an illusion. He's trying to capture the moon! And he reminds me of someone else...

Genesis 3:6: “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise....” (And Scripture says God alone is wise, Romans 16:27.)

Well, Eve looked and saw the good hanging on a tree. She chose to take the good, and then she knew her choice was not good and she was not free. She was a pirate who tried to capture the moon. She is our mother, and since then, we all try to capture the moon. It's our will, our nature, our desire...to capture the moon.

Did you know that Scripture refers to Jesus as the moon? Psalm 89:36-37: “The seed of David shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me; it shall be established forever like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky.” So the seed of David is like the moon, the faithful witness that reflects the light of the sun in the dark, night sky.

In Revelation 1:5, Jesus is called “The faithful witness,” and we already know that the faithful witness is the moon. In Revelation 21:5, we learn that in the New Jerusalem, God will be our sun and Jesus our moon. So Jesus is (or at least is like) the moon. And we are all pirates.

Think about it. If you really believe that you own anything, you're a pirate...especially if you call yourself a Christian. God owns everything. God made everything.

Recently everybody's been debating how many are “takers” and how many are “makers.” Biblically speaking, it's an utterly stupid debate. We're *all* takers. And if you think you're a maker, you're the worst kind of taker. You didn't make the oil in the ground, you didn't make the workers you employ, you didn't make the crop in your fields or the oxygen you breath or even the will with which you make choices.

If you chose the good, you sure didn't make the good. And you didn't choose the chooser that chose the good. You didn't make *you*. And if you think you did, you're the worst kind of lunatic. And maybe we're all lunatics.

Last time I said, “I think the thing that most of us call *free will* the Bible calls *sin*.” Because what do we mean by free will? Most folks seem to mean that we are each solely responsible for our own choices, and so each of us is an unchosen chooser, an uncaused cause, and uncreated creator...that each of us hangs the moon!

Think about it. Who am I to choose the good? Doesn't that mean to judge the good? What is the good? Jesus said, “God alone is good.” Now, you may say, “Hey, I'm a bit offended. I didn't judge God. I didn't capture God. I didn't hang God on tree. I'm good, and I'm free! People aren't robots.”

Are we just robots? I hope you ask that question. Paul writes that we are predestined. So I think we're supposed to ask that question. Of course, the Bible never uses the word “robot.” But it does refer to people as “dead in their trespasses and sins”...as if we are the walking dead, cursed men, men who love nothing and hate the moon, for the moon shows us for what we “RRR.” It's an “RRR”-rated world, a pirate world, a fallen world.

But in Ephesians 1:13-14, part of the longest sentence in the Bible, Paul writes:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places....

Two sermons ago we asked, “If I'm blessed with every spiritual blessing, why don't I feel blessed?” We said that maybe we're like cursed pirates who chose to steal the good. And now, surrounded by the good, we can't taste the good. We drink the wine but can't taste the wine because we have bad hearts, bad wills, bad choosers. And yet, He has “blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.” Next verse...

...even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

Last time we realized that if He chose us before the foundation of the world, it means He chose us before we made any choices. Which means His decision to bless us is deeper than our decision to curse Him. In fact, even our decision to curse Him is utterly dependent on His prior decision to bless us and to create us.

God does not will evil, for evil is that which God does not will. And yet it seems that He wills that we would will what He does not will...or at least know what He does not will...that is, He “subjected creation to futility,” writes Paul in Romans 8. And He “consigned all to disobedience,” writes Paul in Romans 11. And yet Paul just wrote that God “chose us to be holy and blameless before Him in love.” He chose us and predestined us in love and to love.

Robots don't love! Love is the good choice made in freedom. That means that God chose us to choose the good in freedom; that means “we love because He first loved us”; that means a good, free will is a gift of grace; that means that if you ever did freely choose the good, you would not be responsible for the choice, and thus you'd never boast as if to “the praise of your own glory,” and thus the choice would never feel like a duty or heavy burden. In fact, you might not even know you made it.

Remember what Jesus says to the sheep on His right on Judgment Day. “Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. You fed me. You clothed me. You comforted me.” And they don't even remember doing it.

It was like they were “walking in good works prepared beforehand.”

It was like they were choosing choices chosen from the foundation of the world.

It was like they were dancing; their “right hand didn’t know what their left hand was doing.”

It was like they lost themselves and found themselves dancing—dancing to another *logos*, another reason, another will, the will that undergirds all creation, the good, free will called love. They didn’t remember their choices, so they sure didn’t take credit for their choices.

Well, can you think of an instance when you made a good, free choice and didn’t take credit for that choice? As if the choice was a gift and not a duty? You know, if you have to make yourself choose the good, you’re not really choosing the good. You’re using the good to capture something you’ve judged better than the good, like praise for choosing the good.

And what is “the good”?

A rich, young ruler said, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” And Jesus said, “Why do you call me good? God alone is good.”

So God is the Good.

Well, this rich, young ruler had, in his words, “obeyed all the commandments in order to get eternal life.” And yet he didn’t know what eternal life was or what the good was. For it (or He) was standing right in front of him! In order words, he had read the book that told him about the good, and now he was trying to capture the good. But he didn’t know the good, so he didn’t love the good. In fact, he was trying to use the good to the praise of his own glory...which is not good but the very definition of evil.

So Jesus looks at him with compassion and says, “Sell all your things.” Forsake all your so-called success. “Come, follow me.” Follow me. Follow me. Jesus is the Life. Jesus is the Good.

But the rich, young ruler went away sad. He was a pirate trying to capture the moon with good deeds and responsible choices. And the moon would not be caught...only followed.

- Why does God make pirates who love nothing and try to capture the moon? That is...
- Why did God make you?
- Why do you exist?
- Why did God put that tree in the middle of the garden?
- Why did God let an evil, talking snake into that garden?
- Why did God subject the creation to futility and consign all people to disobedience? That is...
- Why is there evil in the world? Even if we chose it, God chose to make us knowing we’d chose it, knowing we’d chose to hang Jesus on a tree.
- Why do bad things happen?
- Why does anything and everything happen?

The politically correct, pastoral answer is: It’s the mysterious, unknown will of God. Yet Paul answers all these questions in this one sentence, Ephesians 1:3-14:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy

and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be [exist] to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

It's all to the praise of His glory!

What is God's glory?

In Exodus 24, we learn that it's like a consuming fire. In Exodus 33, Moses says, "Show me your glory." And God says, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and proclaim my name, The Lord, I Am. And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."

So God's glory is His goodness, and His goodness is like a word proclaimed, an eternal choice, a free choice, a free will, a decision to be gracious and merciful. God then hides Moses in the cleft of the rock as He passes by, for He says, "No man may see my face and live."

In 2 Corinthians 4:16, Paul writes that God gives us "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining in the face of Christ." We die with Him and rise with Him. God's glory is saving people in Christ Jesus. The name *Jesus* means "God is salvation." Jesus is the radiance of the glory of God (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus is the Word of God, the free will of God, the goodness of God, and the revelation of the glory of God. All things work for the praise of His glory, and we are predestined to live to the praise of His glory.

But pirates who love nothing live to the praise of their own glory.

Well, let's finish the story. The pirate who loved nothing captured everything he knew that the moon loved.

And the pirate sailed that bursting ship back to his island. And he waited. Clouds moved across the sky. And the wind blew the empty sea. And finally the moon rose.

But when it looked down, it saw that everything it loved was gone. So it moved down to look a little closer. And the fierce pirate, sitting on his island, laughed. The moon looked again, but still it saw no curtains, it saw no small hills. So again it came a little closer.

The pirate laughed again, and stood up to sharpen his sword. And the moon looked and saw nothing and came still closer. It looked and looked through streets and in villages and down empty wells. There were no pools of water. There were no poets, no lonely dancers.

So it came closer still.

And the pirate, seeing the moon come lower, yelled out, "Moon! I have captured every ship and everything you love, and now I will capture you!"

Then he threw open the hatch. And the moon saw everything it loved streaming out of the pirate's ship and onto the pirate's island: kitchen curtains, and long candles, and violins playing sad music, and moody poets, and lonely wolves, and dancers who danced in the middle of the night. It gave a little sigh and came closer to the island, and the pirate watched. Still the moon drew closer, and the pirate saw it grow.

"I didn't know the moon was quite so big," he thought. And still the moon came down, the moon came down, closer, still closer. And the pirate started to feel afraid. He tore through the book that told all about the moon, but he couldn't find a place that told how big the moon was. And the moon came down, growing larger, larger than the pirate's ship, larger than his island, larger than anything the pirate had ever seen.

The pirate trembled, and he thought, "If I return everything I've captured, that will surely stop the moon." So he cut the saddles and the bits from the wild horses, and the chain from the flowers, and they drifted out to sea. And a shadow passed across the giant moon; it was the birds streaming away.

And still the moon came down. So the pirate freed the madly playing violins and the howling wolves, the poets chanting and the pools bursting from their barrels, and he sent them sailing home.

Moonlight spread over the waves, it covered his empty island. The pirate lifted his trembling sword as the whole sky became the moon....

And then the moon stopped. And waited.

The pirate stared into its light, and a wild shiver ran through him like a wave. He forgot about being afraid. He forgot about being fierce. He lowered his sword, he dropped his armor, and he whispered, "Moon, wonderful moon, it is you who have captured me."

And the moon glowed through him and above him. Then, slowly, it started back into the sky, growing smaller, growing distant, until once again it sailed as it pleased. It drifted over the sea and over the island where now there was someone new the moon loved, who loved the moon.

For at that moment, in the middle of the night, the pirate began to dance.

Now I have just a few more questions. In the end...

1. Was the pirate good? Yes.
2. Was the pirate free? Yes.
3. Did the pirate love the moon? Yes.
4. And was that his choice? No. Yes. No. Well, if it was his choice, he certainly didn't boast in his choice. It was actually his bad choice to try and capture the moon, but the moon's good choice to come down and capture him. So when he did love, he didn't boast in this love...because he had fallen in love.

I asked you a moment ago if you could think of an instance in which you freely chose the good and didn't take credit for the choice. Well, have you ever fallen in love? If you have, I bet you didn't say this:

Wow, I'm really something for having fallen in love. I deserve a reward for falling in love. It was tough, but I read a book and realized it was the right thing to do. What a responsible fellow I am! What a good fellow I am! Because, dog gone it, I decided to fall in love.

If you actually said that, wouldn't it be clear?—You have not fallen in love. In fact, you're using love to the praise of your own glory.

So maybe a good free will is a will that's been smitten by love, a will that's fallen in love with love. And God is love, and God is Good. Who am I to choose the good? I am the beloved. But I only choose because I've been chosen, for a good free will is a will that's fallen in love.

So maybe God creates pirates who love nothing and then arranges all things (works all things) according to the counsel of His will: snakes, trees, crosses, even sin and death. He arranges all things so those pirates would try to capture the moon. And in this way, the moon would capture them.

Maybe God arranges all things so that we would fall in love...and God is love. Maybe creation is the set for billions and billions of love stories, so creation is a factory for creating billions and billions of good free wills: pirates who once tried to capture the moon but now love the moon, forever dancing to the praise of His glory, moonstruck lunatics, not *bad* crazy, crazy in love. And God is love. That is, maybe God is "making man in His own image and likeness." Maybe it's still the sixth day on the edge of the seventh.

Well, now you may be getting frustrated with me. You're thinking, "That's a children's book, Peter. And the moon doesn't love people. The moon can't come down. And no one ever tried to capture the moon!"

Is that right?

Remember, the moon is the "faithful witness." And the faithful witness is Jesus (Revelation 1:5). Revelation 6:12-13: "When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood...." The sixth seal out of the seven seals, like the sixth day of seven days.

Well, the gospels record that at the sixth hour on the sixth day—Friday, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth. Jesus, the faithful witness, was drenched in His own blood. At 3:00 p.m., he died. A Roman centurion dropped to his knees and began to worship. A pirate who loved nothing now loved the moon.

Fifty days later, Peter stood up on Pentecost and said, "These men are not drunk as you suppose." (However, I bet they were intoxicated...they were moonstruck.) "This is what was prophesied by the prophet Joel: 'In the last days I will pour out my spirit on all flesh...and I will show signs in the heavens. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood.'"

Peter talked as if all those listening had already seen these "signs." Well, we know that as Jesus hung on the tree, the sun turned to darkness. In ancient times an "eclipsed moon" was called a "blood moon." For light, refracted through the earth's atmosphere, colors the moon red.

[Image of a blood red moon]

This is a picture of the moon in eclipse. In a lunar eclipse, the moon descends into the shadow cast by Mother Earth, as she blocks the light of the sun...just like Jesus descended into the shadow cast by us and our sin.

Many scholars date Jesus' death on the tree to the Friday before Passover, April 3, 33 AD. They do that for a variety of Biblical and historical reasons but primarily because of modern astronomical calculations that reveal that around 3:00 p.m. (Jesus died at 3:00 p.m.) on April 3, 33 AD, the moon went into full eclipse below the horizon of the Judean desert and thus rose blood red the evening of April 3 as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea took the body of Jesus and placed it in the tomb.

You can investigate that all you want and make of that what you will. I'm just saying:

Maybe all of us "pirates who loved nothing" really did capture the moon.

Maybe all of us religious, rich, young rulers finally did nail Him down.

Maybe God allowed the children of Eve to hang the moon...on a tree.

But maybe it was a decision from the foundation of the world.

So maybe it was an ambush of glory and grace.

Maybe we captured the moon because, from the foundation of the world, sun and moon chose to capture us.

Maybe God allowed us to take His life on the tree...for from the foundation of the world, He chose to for-give His life on the tree.

Maybe we took the Good...for God chose to for-give the Good so that we would fall in love with the Good, be captured by the Good, smitten by the Good. And God is Good. God is love, and God is free.

In other words:

- We were predestined to "live to the praise of His glorious grace."
- We were predestined to good choices made in freedom.
- We were predestined to love.
- We were predestined to be made in the image of God.

He creates pirates who try to capture the moon *so that* the moon can capture those pirates, *so that* those pirates will dance forever in the light of His love. John 12:32: "And when I am lifted up from the earth [on the tree] I will draw [romance] all people unto myself."

At the cross, it happened "once for all." Yet all happens for once. I mean, the cross stands at the boundary of time and eternity. So it happened once, and it happens all the time from the foundation of the world. In other words, you are surrounded by the Good. And the kingdom of Heaven really is at hand. You are surrounded by the Good, God is Good, and you can try to capture the Good. You do it all the time. Or maybe it will capture you...and that's the end of time and the beginning of life eternal.

To try and capture the Good is sin and bondage.

To be captured by the Good is grace, life, and love.

Every week we confess our sin and receive His grace—confess our bad choices and believe His good choice. We confess that we've tried to capture the moon, and we watch as the moon captures us. That's called worship. Worship is staring at the moon, howling at the moon, dancing under the moon. It's getting moonstruck.

Paul sure seems to say that one great and glorious day everyone will be moonstruck and live to the praise of God's glory.

Romans 8: He subjected all creation to futility.

Romans 11: He consigned all men to disobedience that He may have mercy on all.

Romans 13: As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me and every tongue give praise to God.

You know, a Savior is glorified by saving! So the more He saves, the more He's glorified.

But in recent years, I've been bewildered and dismayed by Christians who seem almost irrationally, unthinkingly, unbiblically opposed to the idea that God in Christ Jesus might just save all, redeem all, and give all a good free will, so that all would dance to the praise of His glorious grace. Why is that?

I was thinking and wondering about that. How many pirates can capture the moon? Well, only one, if you think about it. That's why pirates don't get along, and they live on islands all by themselves. Only one Pirate can capture the moon. But how many pirates can be captured by the moon? *All pirates*. How many pirates can dance by the light of the moon? Well, every pirate on the face of the earth.

So why are we so offended by grace?

Maybe we're still pirates trying to capture the moon,
trying to capture the kingdom
with good deeds and responsible choices.
Maybe we're still pirates trying to capture the moon,
because we don't know the moon,
so we just need to stare at the moon.

Communion

On the night He was betrayed by us (probably the start of April 3, 33 AD), the Faithful Witness took break, and He broke it saying, "This is my body given to you. Take it and eat it." And in the same manner, after the supper, He took the cup and said, "This cup is the covenant in my blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it, all of you."

He calls you to follow Him, to come to His table, to stare at the moon, ingest the glory of God, and let the moon shine through you. In Jesus' name, believe the Gospel, and worship.

Benediction

[Clip from *Bruce Almighty*]

[Bruce stands at his window and pulls the moon closer with a pretend rope, dotting stars into the sky with his finger.]

Grace: Honey, hi. Wow! I've never seen the moon that big!

Bruce: Yeah, we really shouldn't waste it.

If you saw the movie, you know Bruce wanted to be God. Bruce tried to capture the moon, and it created hell on earth...tidal waves, earthquakes, etc. Bruce tried to capture the moon, but in the end, the moon captured Bruce. There's a great scene with Bruce on the roof under the moon, watching his girlfriend suffer in prayer, for Bruce has broken her heart. Bruce tried to capture love, and in the end love captured Bruce. And her name was Grace.

You have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of God's glorious grace. So if you want to know if you made a good, free choice, just ask yourself this question: "Who gets the glory from my choice?" Be careful...because if you think, "Hey, God get's the glory! I'm pretty great because I gave God the glory!"...then you're not giving God the glory. That's why it's best not to judge yourself but just keep staring at the moon.

That's what lovers do. They just stare at each other and give away glory. "You're so wonderful." "No, *you're* wonderful." It's nutty; it's loony. They're moonstruck.

In the name of Jesus, may you always be moonstruck.

Disclaimer: The following document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.